



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/510,985	10/13/2004	Akihiko Yanaga	2004 1613A	2208
513	7590	10/21/2008	EXAMINER	
WENDEROTH, LIND & PONACK, L.L.P.			FLORY, CHRISTOPHER A	
2033 K STREET N. W.			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
SUITE 800			3762	
WASHINGTON, DC 20006-1021			MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
			10/21/2008	PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/510,985	Applicant(s) YANAGI, AKIHIKO
	Examiner CHRISTOPHER A. FLORY	Art Unit 3762

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If no period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED. (35 U.S.C. § 133).

Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on 22 September 2008.

2a) This action is FINAL. 2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) 1,4,5 and 11-14 is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) 1,4,5 and 11-14 is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All b) Some * c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/96/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application

6) Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Continued Examination Under 37 CFR 1.114

1. A request for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, including the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e), was filed in this application after final rejection. Since this application is eligible for continued examination under 37 CFR 1.114, and the fee set forth in 37 CFR 1.17(e) has been timely paid, the finality of the previous Office action has been withdrawn pursuant to 37 CFR 1.114. Applicant's submission filed on 22 September has been entered.

Response to Arguments

2. Applicant's arguments, see paragraph 3 of page 4, filed 22 September 2008, with respect to the objection to claim 11 have been fully considered and are persuasive. The objection to claim 11 has been withdrawn.

3. Applicant's arguments filed 22 September 2008 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. Claims 1, 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Granzotto'392 or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Granzotto'392, or Granzotto'392 in view of Reinhold'823, or Granzotto'392 in view of Marangoni'783. Claims 4, 5 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Granzotto'392 or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Granzotto'392 in view of Reinhold'823, or still alternatively as obvious over Granzotto'392 in view of Marangoni'783 further in view of Reinhold'823.

4. Regarding Applicant's argument that the limitations of claim 12, namely that the arm portions are rigidly attached to the body case, can be supported by Figures 1a and 1b, it is first noted that a matter of material properties, such as rigidity of a material or joint, cannot be supported solely by the drawings. One cannot tell from a drawing if a device or component thereof is made of a rigid material such as metal or a flexible plastic, for instance. Even if the arms extend seamlessly as Applicant suggests is shown in Figure 1b, this does not preclude the joint from being thin in nature or made of a flexible material. Further, neither Figure 1a or 1b, nor the remainder of the figures, is presented at a perspective to support the Applicant's assertion that there are no intermediate elements between the arm portions 4 and body case 3 that would suggest anything other than a rigid attachment. As such, the §112 rejection of claim 12 is considered proper and is maintained since support for material properties such as rigidity cannot be upheld solely on the drawings as submitted.

5. In response to applicant's argument that Granzotto'392 fails to disclose the switching means starting detection, display and transmission after all the push-down switches are pushed down and maintained for a specific period of, a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. As previously pointed out, the term "switching" adds enough structure and function to the phrasing such that 112, 6th paragraph is not considered to be invoked. Further, in line 22 of claim 1, changing "operable to start" to

simply "starting" is considered to broaden the claim as it reads as functional language. The change from "when" to "after" in the following line also fails to limit or change the scope of the claim language.

Applicant further states that the function of the Granzotto'392 stethoscope would perform detection immediately upon extension of the arms, rather than waiting a specific period of time. It is first noted that even immediate activation of the device would read on the language requiring a "specific period of time" since an instant is a measure of time. Additionally, Applicant has not taken into account the previously argued point that Granzotto'392 further discloses that the contact electrodes must also be pressed firmly to the body before any readings will be made, such that detection would not begin immediately upon extension of the arms but only when extension is performed in conjunction with the pushing down of the electrodes on the body, which could happen immediately but could also happen several seconds, minutes or hours later.

6. Applicant also argues against the statement that push-down switches are well known in the art, not contending that such switches are well-known, but that such switches also fail to meet the requirement of being maintained for a specific period of time before detecting. The Examiner maintains that such switches read exactly on this limitation, giving as an example a bi-point contact heart rate monitor on a treadmill. Such a system works only when both hands maintain contact with the electrodes with a certain amount of pressure and for a period of time, usually a few seconds, before a heart rate reading is given.

7. Applicant's arguments against Reinhold'823 and Marangoni'783 are considered moot since it has been shown that Granzotto'392 sufficiently reads on the argued claim limitations.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

8. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

9. Claim 12 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. The specification does not recite that the arm portions of the device are rigidly attached to the body case, nor is this feature made obvious from the drawings.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102/103

10. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

11. Claims 1, 12 and 13 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Granzotto et al. (US Patent 6,757,392, hereinafter Granzotto'392) or, in the alternative,

under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Granzotto'392, or Granzotto'392 in view of Reinhold, Jr. (US Patent 5,339,823, hereinafter referred to as Reinhold'823), or Granzotto'392 in view of Marangoni (US 4,535,783, hereinafter Marangoni'783).

Regarding claim 1, Granzotto'392 discloses an electrocardiograph (column 1, lines 60-67) comprising a body case (Fig. 1, headpiece 1) which is held on a chest portion of a subject (ABSTRACT; column 3, lines 8-22); a common electrode provided on a back surface of said body case (Fig. 4, fixed electrode 16); a pair of arm portions which extend from said body case (Fig. 4, arms 18); electrodes for detecting electrocardiographic complex which are provided in both end portions of said pair of said arm portions respectively (Fig. 4, electrodes 17; column 2, lines 1-7); a detecting means for detecting electrocardiographic complex based on signals detected by said electrodes (column 4, lines 51-59); a display means for displaying said electrocardiographic means (Fig. 3, LCD 11 displays the electrocardiographic complex and heart rate); a transmitting means for transmitting said electrocardiographic complex (LCD 11 can be considered a transmitting means; likewise, circuitry or wiring between the disclosed memory and display constitutes a transmitting means. Granzotto'392 shows said body case suspended from a neck of said subject by a suspending means (Fig. 1, flexible bows 31; column 2, lines 3-39).

Further regarding the switching means of claim 1, Granzotto'392 discloses switching contacts at pivot joints 19 for the purpose of connecting electrodes 17 to the main body electrode only when the arms are in a fully extended position (column 4, lines 7-27), while the unit will otherwise function as a passive ausculatory device. This

can clearly be seen as a disclosure of a switching means that would start detection, display and transmission of the electrocardiographic complex to the LCD, where data would only be recorded if the device were placed in contact with the chest portion of the subject. Granzotto '392 further discloses that the arm parts are molded of a flexible plastic and incline at an obtuse angle which changes under pressure on the stethoscope head, and further that such manual pressure on the stethoscope head is necessary to achieve firm contact of the electrodes to detect, display and record the electrocardiographic information (column 4, lines 1-47, emphasis on lines 28-47). This can reasonably be considered a disclosure of push-down switches either in that the arm pivot switching contacts or the electrodes themselves must be pushed down with this manual pressure in order to make contact with all electrodes to the skin in order to detect, display and record the electrocardiographic complex, such that when this push-down pressure is not applied, contact is not made and the ECG complex is not detected.

Alternatively, push-down switches located in the electrode contacts of externally applied ECG and heart rate acquiring electrode devices are well-known in the art (e.g. treadmills, bathroom scales, or other devices where bi-point electrocardiographic data acquisition is desired through a gripping or weight-bearing means) as a simple to manufacture and reliable means of conserving battery or device power by disconnecting the ECG circuit when the user is not applying gripping or weight-bearing pressure on the device since no useful data could be collected in such a situation. Simultaneous application of pressure to both electrode contacts in these configurations initiates ECG

collection, analysis and readout. It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Granzotto'392 with push-down switches located in the electrodes to provide Granzotto'392 with the same well-known advantages of conserving device power by only collecting ECG data when pressure is applied to the electrodes to signify a significant connection to a patient for whom collection of ECG data is desired.

Still further in the alternative, Reinhold'823 teaches a device wherein human pressure is applied to engage an array of electrodes with the skin of the chest of an individual to place the electrodes in an operative relation to obtain electrocardiogram data from the individual (abstract; column 2, lines 20-35). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the system of Granzotto'392 with the pressure-activated electrodes and control protocol as taught by Reinhold'823 to provide Granzotto'329 with the same advantage of engaging an electrode array to the chest in an operative relation so as to be able to effectively obtain electrocardiogram data.

Still further in the alternative, Marangoni'783 teaches an electrocardiography recorder in which electrodes (Fig. 1A, electrodes 7 and 8) are disposed over an pressure switch (Fig. 4, switch 21) in such a way that the switch is actuated when the contacts are brought into contact with the skin with a predetermined minimum satisfactory pressure to initiate recording of ECG data, and not record ECG data otherwise (column 4, lines 19-38). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify Granzotto'392 with the

press-down electrode switching means as taught by Marangoni'783 to provide Granzotto'392 with the same advantage of recording ECG data only when satisfactory pressure contact between the electrodes and the skin have been made.

Regarding the limitation that the body case and pair of arm portions form a T-shape, it is noted that Figure 5 of Granzotto'392 clearly shows a t-shaped device with the top arms forming the crossbar and the bottom arm and body forming the vertical base. Alternatively, it would have been an obvious matter of design choice to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the system as taught by Granzotto'392 with the t-shaped configuration, because Applicant has not disclosed that said t-shape provides an advantage, is used for a particular purpose, or solves a stated problem. One of ordinary skill in the art, furthermore, would have expected Applicant's invention to perform equally well with the configuration as taught by Granzotto'392, because it provides a means for properly positioning the recording electrodes and since it appears to be an arbitrary design consideration which fails to patentably distinguish the instant application over Granzotto'392 .

Regarding claim 12, arm joints (19) of Granzotto'392 can reasonably be considered rigidly fixed using several definitions of the word rigid, such as unyielding, firm, exacting, thorough, rigorous or "so as to meet precise standards." Although the joints are rotational, they are constructed in a solid, or unyielding and firm, manner so that the device may be used consistently, repeatedly and accurately over time. Further, the device would be constructed using exacting and thorough standards of construction in order to meet precise design standards. Alternatively, Reinhold'823 clearly shows a

device with rigidly attached arm portions (Fig. 5, where arm portions are considered to contain electrodes V1, V2, V5 and V6) in order to conform to the body and maintain proper electrode alignment under pressure.

Regarding claim 13, Granzotto'392 can reasonably be interpreted as elongated and clearly shows a first and second ends where the arm portions are attached.

Alternatively, Reinhold'823 is clearly elongated.

12. Claims 4, 5 and 11 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Granzotto'392 or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Granzotto'392 in view of Reinhold'823, or still alternatively as obvious over Granzotto'392 in view of Marangioni'783 further in view of Reinhold'823.

Regarding claims 4 and 5, it is evident from the scope of the disclosure in Granzotto'392 that non-paste electrodes are inherently necessary for proper function of the Granzotto'392 device. It is well known that stethoscopes operate by being placed temporarily on the chest of a subject and are held there by human force rather than adhesive means. Granzotto'392 further discloses that electrodes 17 are moveable (column 4, lines 1-27) and applied through pressure (column 4, lines 45-47) rather than adhesive means.

Alternatively in the same field of endeavor, Reinhold'823 teaches the use of non-adhesive precordial electrodes on an electrocardiograph device in which human pressure is applied to engage the array of six precordial electrodes with the skin of the chest of the individual in an operative relation (ABSTRACT; column 4, lines 54-66).

Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the

invention to modify the system of Granzotto'392 with the non-adhesive electrodes of Reinhold'823 to provide the Granzotto'392 system with the advantage of temporarily applying the device to a patient in an operative relation with human pressure contact (motivation to combine provided by Reinhold'823 ABSTRACT; column 4, lines 54-66).

Regarding claim 11, the suspending means of Granzotto et al. is considered to be detachable because the bows 31 are made of a rigidly flexible material known in the art which hold the device on the neck of a user while in their resting configuration, but can be manually separated to allow removal of the device from the neck. The suspending means of Granzotto et al. is detachable to said body case because the bows 31 could be physically removed from the chest-piece 2 without altering in any way the function of the electrocardiograph subsystem.

Alternatively in the same field of endeavor, Reinhold'823 teaches an electrocardiograph device employing a lanyard for engagement around the neck of the user (column 5, lines 1-20). It is well known that a lanyard, such as one used on a set of keys or on a personal camera, comprises a separate flexible loop body (typically fabric) that is attached in a releasable manner to the main body of a device, either by tying through a hole in the device body, attaching to the device body by a key ring, or releasably inserting a male connector portion into a compatible female connector portion. This establishes a detachable quality to the lanyard taught by Reinhold'823. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the system of Granzotto'392 with the detachable lanyard as taught by Reinhold'823 to provide the Granzotto'392 system with the same advantage of

releasably engaging the device around a user's neck and allowing for proper vertical adjustment of the electrodes to record an electrocardiographic complex (motivation to combine provided by Reinhold'823, column 5, lines 1-20).

13. Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Granzotto'392, or Granzotto'392 in view of Reinhold'823, or Granzotto'392 in view of Marangoni'783.

Regarding claim 14, Granzotto'392 discloses the invention substantially as claimed including that the push-down buttons must all be pushed down at the same time as explained above, but does not explicitly disclose that the period of time for which the push-down switches are maintained in a push-down state is at least 5 seconds. It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to hold the electrodes in the pushed down configuration for at least 5 seconds, since it has been held that where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, discovering the optimum or workable ranges (*In re Aller*, 105 USPQ 233) or optimum value of a result effective variable (*In re Boesch*, 617 F.2d 272, 205 USPQ 215 (CCPA 1980)) involves only routine skill in the art.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Christopher A. Flory whose telephone number is (571) 272-6820. The examiner can normally be reached on M - F 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m..

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Angela Sykes can be reached on (571) 272-4955. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

/Christopher A. Flory/
22 October 2008

/George Manuel/
Primary Examiner